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NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

NEWS

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NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Dr. I. S. Ravdin, John Rhea Barton Professor of Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania, has been elected Chairman of the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine to succeed Dr. Worth B. Daniels (Georgetown University), whose term as a member of the Board expired in February along with that of Dr. Benjamin Spector (Tufts University).

THIS OLD HOUSE

Careful inspection of the floor area of the basement room in which the Library's collection of theses is housed has revealed that a wooden floor covering an area of about 400 square feet is in imminent danger of collapse. Attacks by fungi and termites have reduced the size of the crossbeam supports from their original dimensions of 2 x 10 to less than 2 x 4 in some instances. Under this area water stands at all times to a depth of about two feet, and provides a breeding place for filter flies and other insects. Steps are being taken to remove the thesis collection to the basement hallway, locate the source of the water, and replace the wooden flooring with concrete.

ARTICLE ON NLM

Part I of a two-part article on the National Library of Medicine, by Dorothy M. Schullian and Frank B. Rogers, was published in the January issue of Library Quarterly. Part II will appear in April.

APPROPRIATIONS HEARING

On February 20 the Director presented the National Library of Medicine's Fiscal Year 1959 budget request to a Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations, of which the Honorable John E. Fogarty of Rhode Island is the Chairman.

COLD WAVE

The heavy snow and cold wave which struck the Eastern Seaboard in mid-February left Washington almost prostrate for a brief period. The National Library of Medicine managed to muster a skeleton work force on February 17 and 18, but on the latter date had to abandon public services; a makeshift circulation staff was available but the Reading Room was so cold that it was deemed unwise to carry on. Icy winds cutting around and through the loose window frames kept the window shades flapping out a mournful rat-a-tat-tat against the hollowness of the great hall. By the next day operations had returned to a semblance of normalcy, although the temperature in the Reading Room remained exceedingly uncomfortable. This is the first time within the memory of those now working at the Library that public services have had to be abandoned. It is said that this is the most severe winter in the last fifteen years; it is to be hoped that at least that long a period will intervene before the next episode.

REGENT HONORED

Dr. Ernest H. Volwiler, president of Abbott Laboratories and a member of the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine, has won the 1958 Priestley Medal of the American Chemical Society. The gold medal for "distinguished services to chemistry" will be presented to Dr. Volwiler in April at the Society's meeting in San Francisco. He has also been appointed chairman-designate of the Division of Chemistry and Chemical Technology of the National Research Council in the National Academy of Sciences, and will assume the chairmanship on July 1.

CLASSIFICATION ADDITIONS AND CHANGES

The first list of Additions and Changes to the National Library of Medicine Classification, 2d edition, 1956, has been issued and is being sent to all those who received the Additions and Changes to the first edition of the Classification. Copies are available free of charge to others who may be interested; requests should be addressed to the Acquisition Division, National Library of Medicine, 7th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington 25, D.C.

MEDICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY IN THE USSR

In the past few months some informative articles and books on the state of medical publishing and medical library services in the Soviet Union have become available.

The Bulgarian bibliographer, Dr. Kh. Trenkhov, has published Meditsinskata bibliografiia (1956), a world-wide survey of medical bibliography which contains a comprehensive section on Russian materials. This book was reviewed by Stanley Jablonski of the National Library of Medicine in the Bulletin of the Medical Library Association for April 1957 (v. 45, no. 2).

A section on medical publishing is included in Pechat' SSSR za sorok let (Publishing in the USSR During 40 Years). According to this source, of the 2,883 medical titles published in 1956, 938 were scientific monographs and 76 were manuals and teaching guides; the remainder were titles of a popular nature.

In 1956 a Division of Scientific Information was established in the Institute for the Organization of Public Health, and in 1957 it began publication of the Meditsinskii Referativnyi Zhurnal (Medical Abstract Journal) which abstracts Soviet medical periodical and monographic literature and articles from about 1,000 selected foreign medical journals. The four sections contain approximately 33,000 abstracts annually.

Sorok let sovetskogo zdravookhraneniia, published by the USSR Ministry of Health in 1957, reviews the development of Soviet medicine during the forty years since the Revolution. This book has two chapters of bibliographical interest: "Medical Press," by T. F. Makarova, and "Medical Libraries in the USSR," by L. Ia. Basias.

Makarova in "Medical Press" presents interesting data on publishing houses, particularly with respect to the centralization of medical publishing in the State Medical Publishing House (Medgiz), which publishes the bulk of Soviet medical literature. In 1957 Medgiz published 52 medical journals.

Basias in "Medical Libraries in the USSR" emphasizes the important role of medical libraries in Soviet research. She says that in the Soviet Union medical libraries are more than mere collections of books -- their main task is to become centers of scientific medical information and medical bibliography. Basias asserts that at the present time the Soviet Union possesses the largest system of medical libraries in the world; at the center of this system is the State Central Medical Library in Moscow.

An article in Bibliotekar', No. 11, 1957, indicates that libraries and library services are especially well organized in the Ukraine. According to this article, in the Ukrainian SSR there are about 1,700 medical libraries containing a total of over 7,500,000 items.

AT THE CAPITOL

The Congressional Record for February 17 (p. 1916-7) carries the remarks of Senator Lister Hill on the "Proposed National Library of Medicine." Senator Hill has appended the editorial on the Library which appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association for November 2, 1957, and a letter from Albert Deutsch to the editor of the Washington POST, published on February 5.

JOURNALS IN TRANSLATION

The following Russian medical and biological journals are being issued in complete English translation, and may be obtained from the sources indicated at the yearly subscription rate specified.

Consultants Bureau
227 W. 17th Street, New York 11, N. Y.
Biochemistry ($20)
Bulletin of Experimental Biology and Medicine ($20)

Pergamon Institute
122 E. 55th Street, New York 22, N. Y.
Biophysics ($30)
Sechenov Physiological Journal ($45)
Problems of Oncology ($30)
Problems of Virology ($20)
Journal of Microbiology, Epidemiology, and Immunobiology ($50)
Problems of Hematology and Blood Transfusion ($20)

American Institute of Biological Sciences
2000 P Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.
Microbiology ($20)
Biological Science Papers, Doklady Akademii Nauk SSSR ($20)

The first two groups are sponsored by the National Institutes of Health; the third group is sponsored by the National Science Foundation. In addition, the National Institutes of Health sponsors the publication, by Excerpta Medica (2 East 103rd Street, New York 29, N. Y.), of Abstracts of Soviet Medicine, issued quarterly in two parts, Part A Basic Medical Sciences, and Part B Clinical Medicine. The subscription rate is $15 for each part, or $25 for both parts.

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